PIFD recognizes Fire Prevention Week

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STAFF WRITER

Sunday marks the start of the 2003 National Fire Prevention Week, as well as the beginning of Parris Island Fire Department's weeklong series of open houses that will highlight fire safety and preparation.

The open houses will run from 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. each day until Oct. 11, and PIFD personnel are encouraging everyone to attend and benefit from the experience.

National statistics support proper fire preparation. According to the National Fire Prevention Association, there were more than 389,000 home fires and 2,670 deaths resulting from those fires within the United States in 2002.

These alarming numbers have not gone unnoticed by the Depot's fire department personnel.

According to the PIFD, there are many things that people do wrong when faced with a fire in their homes. The open houses are designed to educate people on how to prevent making key mistakes that could led to unnecessary harm to them or their families.

"Remember to get out and stay out," said Harold Sterne, the Depot's chief fire inspector, who revealed that the PIFD responded to more than 66 fire emergencies last year alone. "More people die from going back in to get keys and to retrieve other items. Your life is worth more then any thing else."

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>
> -Harold Sterne, Depot's chief fire inspector

This year, the PIFD has already responded to calls from Tri-Command Housing 10 times, which is a good enough reason to ensure your family is prepared, said Stern.

He also suggested that families follow a few simple guidelines when preparing for the worst-case scenario:

• Have an escape plan with a meeting place.
• Know emergency numbers.
• Have a working smoke detector on each floor, at a minimum.
• Have a working ABC Fire Extinguisher available in the home.
• Have a lid by the stove when cooking to smother out any fires that flare up while cooking.

Nearly two out of three home-heating fires and five out of six associated deaths involve devices other than central furnaces or water heaters, according to a new report by the National Fire Protection Association. That is because the hot surfaces of furnaces and water heaters tend to be farther away from people and things that can burn – and because space heaters create more opportunities for human error. The most common problems leading to fires are failing to clean devices, placing them too close to combustible items, flaws in construction or design, and improper fueling.

The history of National Fire Prevention Week has it roots in the Great Chicago Fire, which occurred on Oct. 9, 1871. Those tragic flames killed some 300 people, left 100,000 homeless and destroyed more than 17,000 buildings. The origin of the fire has generated speculation since its occurrence, with fact and fiction becoming blurred over the years.

One popular legend has it that "Mrs. O'Leary" was milking her cow when the animal kicked over a lamp, setting the O'Leary barn on fire and starting the spectacular blaze. However, once the massive fire began, it swiftly took its toll, burning more than 2,000 acres in 27 hours.

The city of Chicago quickly rebuilt, however, and within a couple of years residents began celebrating their successful restoration to memorialize the anniversary of the fire with festivities.

For more information on the open houses or other fire prevention/safety questions, call the PIFD at 228-3637.

Members of the Silent Drill Platoon perform a rifle inspection during the Battle Color Ceremony at the Peatross Parade Deck Sept. 25. The inspection involves precise spins and tosses — movements that are perfected through 500 hours of practice.
Cpl. Jennifer Brofer

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All their practice and hard work seemed to pay off, as shown by the enthusiastic crowd's applause.

After their performance, the Marine Corps Color Guard closed the ceremony by presenting the National Colors, carried by the Color Sergeant of the Marine Corps, and the Battle Colors, which has 50 streamers and silver bands displayed to commemorate the military campaigns in which Marines have participated.

Overall, the performance left a lasting impression on many of the audience members.

"The Silent Drill Platoon was breathtaking," said Vincent Breton, who came to see his son graduate that Friday. "I've always been infatuated with the Marines. It's amazing how in sync they are and how they trust each other."

The Battle Color Detachment will continue to tour the world and captivate audiences with their precision, pride and pristine uniforms before returning to their home in Washington, D.C., to start all over again.

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staff works with federal, state and historical preservation offices to assist the Marine Corps in managing the many archaeological resources here and ensuring their preservation for the future," he said.

The Museum, which houses the special exhibit and permanent displays on local archaeology, is open from 10 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., daily with extended hours on Thursdays and Fridays of graduation weeks.

NMCI takes over Corps' computers

Part one of four examines the who and what of the Corps' new NMCI computer system

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 2 DAVID ROGOWSKY
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The long wait is nearly over and soon the Depot will begin its transition to the Navy Marine Corps Intranet. To help facilitate the transition, we begin a four-part series of articles to explain the program and the process of implementing it here.

What is NMCI?

The Department of the Navy developed the concept for NMCI to procure an affordable upgrade to the Navy and Marine Corps' Information Technology infrastructure incorporating enhanced technology, increasing information assurance and ensuring connectivity between Navy and Marine Corps shore installations across the U.S. and several overseas locations. The NMCI will replace the current stove-piped infrastructure with a single, overarching network for voice, video and data information exchange. When completed, the NMCI will be the world's largest intranet, connecting more than 360,000 sailors, Marines and DoN civilian employees.

Meet the Contractor

Plano, Texas-based Electronic Data Systems Corporation leads the team of companies charged with developing, deploying and maintaining the NMCI. The EDS/NMCI team includes industry leaders Raytheon, MCI, WAM!NET, Microsoft, Cisco, Dell, Dolch, Dataline, General Dynamics and a wide range of small businesses. Unlike other Department of Defense contracts that procure a product eventually operated and maintained by military and government civilian personnel, the EDS team will remain in place to maintain and operate the system in concert with the government.

Why NMCI?

With a finite budget for information technology, the DoN realized a new solution was needed to allow the department to routinely upgrade its systems and eliminate connectivity problems.

The Navy currently operates hundreds of computer networks in the U.S. While some commands enjoy very robust, modern infrastructures, equipment and software, others struggle to keep pace with rapidly changing technology. The vast number of operating networks and the myriad programs being utilized makes the sharing of information a "hit or miss" proposition and contrary to the department's vision for a network-centric force.

"Our business model and our business strategy focused on what we wanted to do versus what we wanted to buy," said Navy NMCI Director Rear Adm. Charles Munns. "We sought to buy a service that would change with our needs rather than buy something we had to keep modernizing to meet our needs."

The Advantage is the Service

The advantages to outsourcing IT services are considerable, but the uniqueness of the service offering is lost on many. The average user in today's computing environment equates their "service" to what resides on their desktop – their machine and the software they operate – while ignoring what is involved behind the wall plug.

EDS/NMCI Enterprise Client Executive Bill Richard likens the NMCI service offering to the way people purchase their utilities.

"You can go to any department store and buy a phone for $9.95 but it doesn't allow you to make a call," said Richard. "You have to contract service through the phone company and there will be charges for the initial hookup, local and long distance service, repair, and other options including additional lines, *69 and caller I.D.," he said. "The NMCI provides not only the device but the full spectrum of services to support each seat in the NMCI environment. NMCI is the total package – hardware, software, infrastructure, connectivity, information security, maintenance, 24x7x365 help desk support, training, and staffing."

Economic Benefits

Anyone who has purchased a home computer knows how quickly technology changes. The economic benefits of NMCI are fixed per-seat pricing, the economies of scale realized from buying from a single provider rather than from scores of contractors, shared cost savings, and regular technology refreshes at no additional cost. Under the NMCI, the DoN is guaranteed technology upgrades of NMCI hardware and software and the associated infrastructure to maintain the network as state-of-the-art. For the user, hardware will be upgraded at a minimum of every three years and software will never be more than one revision from "state of the shelf."

"When one views the NMCI from a department-wide perspective, they quickly realize the DoN could never afford to do this on their own and sustain it, " said Richard.

For more information on NMCI, please visit the following Web sites:

The EDS NMCI Web site - *www.eds.com/nmci*

The Department of the Navy NMCI Web site -

http://www.nmci.navy.mil/

NMCI Frequently Asked Questions

http://www.eds-gov.com/nmci-faqs/faq_general.asp

The second installment of this series, Preparing for NMCI, will be appearing next week.